

Tick Bites

It should be emphasized that this is not only a work related issue. Tick bites can happen when your camping, fishing, working around the yard; and soon we'll be walking in the woods looking for Morels and other mushrooms that nature supplies us. Ticks are dangerous for pets as well so make sure you take care of Fido and Boots.

Most tick bites are painless and cause only minor signs and symptoms, such as redness, swelling or a sore on the skin. But some ticks transmit bacteria that cause illnesses, including Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. In general, to transmit disease most ticks need to be attached for at least 24 hours.

To take care of a tick bite

- Remove the tick promptly and carefully. Use fine-tipped forceps or tweezers to grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible. Gently pull out the tick using a slow and steady upward motion. Avoid twisting or squeezing the tick. Don't handle the tick with bare hands. Experts don't recommend using petroleum jelly, fingernail polish or a hot match to remove a tick.
- If possible, seal the tick in a container. Put the container in a freezer. Your doctor may want to see the tick if you develop new symptoms.
- Wash your hands and the bite site. Use warm water and soap, rubbing alcohol, or an iodine scrub.

When to seek emergency care

Call 911 or your local emergency number if you develop:

- A severe headache
- Difficulty breathing
- Paralysis
- Heart palpitations

When to contact your doctor

- You aren't able to completely remove the tick. The longer the tick remains attached to your skin, the greater your risk of getting a disease from it.
- The rash gets bigger. A small red bump may appear at the site of the tick bite. This is normal. But if it develops into a larger rash, perhaps with a bull's-eye pattern, it may indicate Lyme disease. The rash usually appears within three to 14 days.

Also consult your doctor if signs and symptoms disappear because you may still be at risk of the disease. Your risk of contracting a disease from a tick bite depends on where you live or travel to, how much time you spend outside in woody and grassy areas, and how well you protect yourself.

- You develop flu-like signs and symptoms. Fever, chills, fatigue, muscle and joint pain, and a headache may accompany the rash.
- You think the bite site is infected. Signs and symptoms include redness or oozing.
- You think you were bitten by a deer tick - you may need antibiotics.
- If possible, bring the tick with you to your doctor's appointment



Picture of Lyme disease Rash



Additional Information from our Health Department

It's that time of year when we're all outdoors more often and are definitely exposed to more ticks! Please note that **some tick bites that cause Lyme disease will never cause a rash**, so it is especially important to take note of the other symptoms that Lyme Disease can cause and report to a medical provider if you experience those symptoms and have spent time outdoors.

Did you know that ticks are very hardy bugs, and can survive very cold temperatures?? Yikes! That means that even though this spring was bitterly cold for so long, we STILL have to be extra careful and check for ticks when we spend time outdoors this year. We hope you can avoid getting tick-borne diseases, such as Lyme disease, by following some of these safety tips provided by the WI Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health: <https://youtu.be/G0XKzRNSvUc>.

#FightTheBite

The DHS website has a great overview of Lyme Disease in WI if anyone wants to learn more:
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tickborne/lyme/index.htm>

Lyme Disease DHS fact sheet: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p4/p42070.pdf>